

EDITORIALS

Arms for the Underground

THE cries of horror coming from enslaved Europe have been replaced by the slogan, "Arms for the Underground." Not that the cruelties committed by the Nazis have lessened or that the sufferings of the subjugated peoples have been eased, but that the men and women of Europe who cling desperately to the ruins of democratic civilization are tired of platonic sympathy. They ask arms to defend themselves and to do their part in the decisive battle for Europe which is now being prepared.

The European Underground, and particularly the French resistance movements, plead for light machine guns, hand grenades and explosives of all kinds. They need these weapons to destroy bridges, roads, factories, military installations and enemy headquarters. They need them to kill Germans, Vichyites, the Doriot, Déats, Quislings, Degrelles and the other terroristic leaders who are plaguing Europe.

All military, moral and political considerations should lead the United Nations to satisfy the Underground's urgent request. From the military point of view there is no doubt that the better the Underground are armed the better they can facilitate invasion. After the splendid achievements of the Russian guerrillas, the Yugoslav and Greek Partisans; after the heroic resistance offered by the young men of France in the Savoy Mountains; after the heroic acts of sabotage reported from Norway, Belgium, Holland and Czechoslovakia, no one can any longer doubt their efficiency. In some cases, of course, the Allies have already helped the European Underground. The Russian guerrillas have become part of the Red Army. The Yugoslav Partisans are being helped considerably by military missions from England, America and Russia. But the active support they receive from Anglo-American air forces and the war material being delivered to them in increasing quantities must be extended to Western Europe because sooner or later it will become an important battlefield.

Moral considerations point in the same direction. The least the United Nations can do for people who have never, despite their terrible plight, lost faith in their cause is to show real solidarity with them by satisfying the unanimous demand of all underground movements.

Finally, political considerations prompt the strengthening of those who are our friends against those who have betrayed all their pledges and obligations and who are supporting the enemy.

Of course there are many difficulties and dangers involved in furnishing arms to the Underground. For one thing there is a scarcity of arms. All the armies of the United Nations need weapons and the Allied authorities in charge of the distribution of available war material naturally hesitate to divert even a minimum to an uncertain destination.

They are afraid, furthermore, that part of these weapons may fall into the hands of the enemy. But in view of the fact that every gun, every explosive which reaches the Underground is being used with such efficiency behind the enemy lines, the diversion of a quantity of arms small in comparison with